

Message Text

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COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 ACDA-07 OMB-01 AGR-05

IO-13 /100 W

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R 071000Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6316

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: PINT MP

SUBJECT: PRE-ELECTION ROUND-UP: DECEMBER 6

REF: PORT LOUIS 1061

SUMMARY: WITH TWO WEEKS TO GO UNTILELECTION DAY, THE FIREL WAS SOMEWHAT NARROWED BY THE WITHDRAWAL OF 39 REGISTERED CANDIDATES, LEAVING A TOTAL OF 370 TO CONTEST THE 70 ASSEMBLY SEATS. HAWOLDAR'S PSP LOST SIX OF ITS CANDIDATES, WHO WITH-DREW UNDER LABOR PARTY PRESSURE. A NUMBER OF INCIDENTS OF INTER-PARTY VIOLENCE CAUSED THE POLICE COMMISSIONER TO ISSUE TWO ADDITIONAL WARNINGS TO THE PARTY LEADERS TO CURB THEIR SYMPATHIZERS OR FACE RESTRICTIONS ON PUBLIC MEETINGS. THE PRESS ALLEGED VARIOUS KINDS OF FOREIGN INTERFERENCE IN THE ELECTIONS WITHOUT OFFERING ANY REAL PROFF. PRIME MINISTER RAMGOOLAM CONTINUED TO CARRY THE ATTACK TO THE MMM, CHARGING QUITE OPENLY THAT IT IS A COMMUNIST PARTY WHICH WOULD INSTALL A DICTATORSHIP IN MAURITIUS. THE PMSD HELD ITS SECOND NATIONAL RALLY IN THE NORTH BUT ATTENDANCE WAS DISAPPOINTINGLY SMALL. THE LEADERSHIP OF THE MMM HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE TO DENOUNCE WHAT IT CALLED MANIPULATION OF THE POLICE (WHO FORCED THE PARTY TO RESCHEDULE ITS BIG NATIONAL RALLY) AND OF THE GOVERN-MENT MEDIA (WHICH THEY SAID WILL NOT GIVE THE MMM A FAIR ALLOCATION OF THE AVAILABLE TIME). THE MMM BEGAN TO RESPOND

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TO THE "ANTI-COMMUNIST" CAMPAIGN OF ITS OPPONENTS
BY TRYING TO REASSURE MIDDLE CLASS VOTERS THAT THEIR PROPERTY

AND LIBERTIES WOULD NOT BE TAKEN AWAY FROM THEM BY A MMM GOVERNMENT. THE SMALLER PARTIES CONTINUE TO FLOUNDER, MAKING IT INCREASSINGLY CLEAR THAT THE BATTLE IS THREE-SIDED, BETWEEN THE IP, THE PMSD AND THE MMM ONLY. END SUMMARY

1. WITH TWO WEEKS TO GO UNTIL ELECTION DAY, THE FIELD WAS SOMEWHAT NARROWED BY THE WITHDRAWAL OF 39 REGISTERED CANDIDATES PRIOR TO THE DECEMBER 3 DEADLINE FOR WITHDRAWING FROM THE RACE. THOSE WHO WITHDREW RECEIVED A REFUND OF THEIR RS. 250 DEPOSIT, WHICH IS FORFEITED BY ANY CANDIDATE WINNING LESS THAN 10 PERCENT OF THE VOTE IN HIS DISTRICT. THERE NOW REMAIN 370 CANDIDATES IN ALL FOR THE 70 SEATS IN THE ASSEMBLY. THE AVERAGE NUMBER CONTESTING EACH SEAT HAS NOW BEEN REDUCED TO SIX PERSONS. OF THE 39 WHO WITHDREW, TWO WERE RUNNING AS INDEPENDENCE PARTY CANDIDATES, ONE FOR THE IFB, 6 FOR HAWOLDAR'S PSP, 3 FOR THE UDM, 3 FOR THE PCR, 2 FOR THE UNION OF THE GENERAL POPULATION, AND 2 FOR THE EASTERN PARTY. THE OTHERS WHO WITHDREW WERE INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES. THE LARGE NUMBER OF PSP WITHDRAWALS PROBABLY RESULTED FROM LABOR PARTY PRESSURE ON THE INDIVIDUALS CONCERNED.

2. THERE WERE A NUMBER OF INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE DURING THE PAST FEW DAYS WHICH GAVE RISE TO FEARS THAT THE POLICE MAY NOT BE ABLE TO KEEP THE SITUATION UNDER CONTROL. THERE WAS A NEARLY SERIOUS CLASH WHEN A CORTEGE OF PMSD CARS DISTURBED A MMM RALLY IN VACOAS ON DECEMBER 5. THE POLICE INTERVENED A BIT TOO LATE AND HAD TO USE TEAR GAS. THE PAPERS REPORTED THAT A CAR RENTED BY AN UNIDENTIFIED POLITICAL PARTY WAS FOUND TO BE CARRYING "OFFENSIVE ARMS AND CUDGELS". THE WEAPONS WERE SEIZED BY THE POLICE. POLICE COMMISSIONER FULENA, IN A COMMUNIQUE TO THE PRESS ON DECEMBER 2, CONFIRMED THAT ARMS HAD BEEN SEIZED FROM CERTAIN CARS. HE GAVE A WARNING AGAINST THIS PRACTICE, STRESSING THAT VEHICLES TRANSPORTING ARMS COULD BE SIEZED AS EVIDENCE. MOREOVER, THE POLICE COMMISSIONER CALLED THE ATTENTION OF THE PUBLIC TO THE FACT THAT THE LAW FORBIDS MAURITIANS FROM PAINTING GRAFITTI ON ROADS AND BUILDINGS. ANY PERSON FOUND GUILTY OF SUCH ACTS IN LIBEL TO A FINE OF RS. 1,000 AND ONE YEAR IN PRISON. (COMMENT: THIS LAW IS IMPOSSIBLE TO ENFORCE, SINCE ALL POLITICAL PARTIES ARE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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ENTHUSISATICALLY PAINTING THEIR INITIALS AND SYMBOLS ON ROADS AND WALLS ALL OVER THE COJNTRY.)

3. DESPITE THE POLICE COMMISSIONER'S EFFORTS, INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE HAVE CONTINUED. SEVERAL PAPERS REPORT THAT THE HOME OF PRAKASH BOOLELL, PMSD CANDIDATE IN PORT LOUIS AND A RELATIVE OF THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, WAS SACKED BY HIS POLITICAL OPPONENTS. A YOUNG LADY NAMED MARIE LAURDES APPADOO, A CANDIDATE OF THE PMSD IN THE EAST, WAS BEATEN BY POLITICAL OPPONENTS, WHOM THE PMSD IDENTIFIED AS "MMM

GANGSTERS". SHE REQUIRED TREATMENT IN A HOSPITAL. IN TURN THE MMM HAS ACCUSED THE PMSD OF ATTACKING ITS CARS WITH STICKS AND STONES. ON DECEMBER 6 FULENA ISSUED ANOTHER WARNING IN WHICH HE SAID THAT DESPITE HIS APPEALS CASES OF VIOLENCE, INTIMIDATION, AND STONE-THROWING ARE INCREASING IN INTENSITY. HE APPEALED TO ALL POLITICAL PARTIES TO EXERCISE SEVERE CONTROL OVER THEIR AGENTS AND SYMPATHIZERS, AND WARNED THAT IT MIGHT BE NECESSARY TO RESTRICT PUBLIC MEETINGS IF THE SITUATION DOES NOT IMPROVE.

4. THE PRESS HAS CARRIED SEVERAL STORIES ALLEGING VARIOUS KINDS OF FOREIGN INTERVENTION IN THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN. THE NATION (PRO-LABOR) ON DECEMBER 2 CLAIMED THAT "SHIPS OF A GREAT POWER WILL BE KEPT IN READINESS IN THE WATERS OFF MAURITIUS TOWARDS THE 20TH OF DECEMBER AND WILL INTERVENE IF NECESSARY TO HELP A COMMUNIST PARTY TAKE POWER IF IT WINS THE ELECTIONS." THE ARTICLE, WHICH PRESENTED NO EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT ITS CHARTES, WAS CLEARLY DIRECTED AGAINST THE MMM. THE PAPER CLAIMED THAT THE INTERVENTION BY THESE WARSHIPS WOULD BE UNDERTAKEN ONLY IN A SITUATION WHERE THE NEW GOVERNMENT FACED A POPULAR UPRISING TO COUNTER ITS VICTORY IN THE FORTHCOMING ELECTIONS. THOUGH THE FOREIGN POWER IN QUESTION WAS NOT IDENTIFIED, THE NATION CLEARLY INTENDED THE READER TO UNDERSTAND THAT IT WAS THE SOVIET UNION. IN CONTRAST TO THE ABOVE, A UDM SPEAKER CLAIMED THAT AMERICAN TROOPS WOULD ARRIVE IN MAURITIUS ON DECEMBER 10 "TO GUARANTEE ORDER". THE INDEPENDENT PAPER L'EXPRESS REPORTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS TOLD FOREIGN EMBASSIES THAT VISITS BY FOREIGN WARSHIPS SHOULD NOT BE MADE TO PORT LOUIS DURING THE ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN EXCEPT IN EMVERGENCIES. THE SUNDAY PAPER, LE DIMANCHE, REPORTED PRESISTENT RUMORS ARE CIRCULATING TO THE EFFECT
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THAT ALL THE MAJOR PARTIES ARE RECEIVING AID FROM ABROAD TO FINANCE THEIR ELECTORAL CAMPAIGNS. THE INDEPENDENCE APRTY IS ALLEGEDLY RECEIVING MONEY FROM INDIA, THE PMSD IS SAID TO BE FINANCED BY SOUTH AFRICA, FRANCE AND OTHER "GREAT POWERS", AND THE MMM IS RECEIVING AID FROM COMMUNIST COUNTRIES.
(COMMENT: FOR ONCE THE US WAS NOT MENTIONED.)

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COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 ACDA-07 OMB-01 AGRE-00
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5. THE PLANTATION WORKERS' UNION, THE MOST IMPORTANT UNION OF SUGAR INDUSTRY WORKERS, HAS ANNOUNCED IT WILL SUPPORT THE LABOR PARTY. THIS WAS EXPECTED AS THIS UNION IS TRADITIONALLY ASSOCIATED WITH LABOR.

6. RAM PYNDIAH'S VIOLENT ATTACK ON HIS BROTHER-IN-LAW, FINANCE MINISTER RINGADOO (REFTEL), CAUSED LITTLE COMMENT IN THE DAYS FOLLOWING ITS PUBLICATION, PROBABLY BECAUSE THIS INTRA-FAMILY DISPUTE IS SOMEWHAT EMBASSASSING TO THE PUBLIC. AT A LABOR PARTY MEETING IN ROSE HILL ON DECEMBER 3 RINGADOO DID NOT REPLY DIRECTLY TO PYNDIAH'S CHARGES, BUT HE ADDED THAT ONLY THE GOOD LORD COULD PARDON HIS BROTHER-IN-LAW. HE ADDED THAT PYNDIAH HAD THREATENED RETALIATION AGAINST THE POLICE AFTER A MMM VICTORY; PYNDIAH ALLEGEDLY SAID THAT THE POLICE WOULD HAVE TO TAKE OFF UNIFORMS AND GO INTO THE FIELDS TO CUT CANE.

7. THE INDEPENDENT PAPER LE MAURICIEN ON DECEMBER 1 REPORTED THAT THE LABOR PARTY IS UNDERTAKING A MAJOR CAMPAIGN IN THE URBAN AREAS IN ORDER TO PROVE THAT IT IS NOT A RURAL AND SECTARIAN PARTY, AS IS COMMONLY BELIEVED, BUT A TRULY NATIONAL PARTY WITH STRENGTH EVERYWHERE. THE INDEPENDENCE PARTY HAS SCHEDULED AN IMPRESSIVE SERIES OF RALLIES IN THE MAJOR UPLAND TOWNS, AND HAS INDICATED THAT A SPECIAL EFFORT WILL BE MADE IN CUREPIPE, WHERE LABOR HOPES FOR A VICTORY ON THE COAT-
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TAILS OF GAETAN DE CHAZAL, AND IN QUATRE BORNES, WHERE IT HOPES TO DEFEAT MMM LEADER BERENGER TO MAKE "A DECISIVE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT ON THE COUNTRY." THE LABOR CAMPAIGN IN THE CITIES HAS THE SECONDARY OBJECTIVE OF DEMONSTRATING THAT THERE IS NO UNDER-THE-TABLE AGREEMENT WITH THE PMSD TO SURRENDER THE CITY DISTRICTS TO THAT PARTY, AS IS ALLEGED BY THE MMM. ACCORDING TO LE MAURICIEN, THE INDEPENDENCE PARTY

IS ALSO MAKING A MAJOR EFFORT WITH THE FEMALE ELECTORATE
BECAUSE IT BELIEVES WOMEN ARE LIKELY TO DETERMINE THE OUTCOME.

8. PRIME MINISTER RAMGOOLAM HAS CONTINUED TO LEAD THE CAMPAIGN
AGAINST THE MMM AS A "COMMUNIST PARTY". AT A RALLY IN HIS
HOME DISTRICT OF TRIOLET ON DECEMBER 4 RAMGOOLAM WAS MORE
DIRECT THAN USUAL. HE SAID: "THE MMM IS A COMMUNIST PARTY.
IF YOU VOTE MMM IT WILL BE THE LAST TIME YOU GO TO THE POLLS
BECAUSE BERENGER WILL INSTALL A DICTATORSHIP AND A MILITARY
REGIME." THE PRIME MINISTER'S PAPER, ADVANCE, PUBLISHED THE
FOLLOWING EXCERPT FROM A RAMGOOLAM SPEECH TO A MUSLIM AUDIENCE'
ON NOVEMBER 30 WHICH IS CHARACTERISTIC OF THE THEMES HE HAS
BEEN SING THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY: "HE WARNED THE INHABITANTS
OF THE AREA AGAINST THE COMMUNISTS. I AM NOT ANTI-COMMUNIST,
NOR ANIT- MARXIST. BUT WE WILL BE CALLED TO MAKE A CHOICE
BETWEEN A FREE SOCIETY AND A DICTATORIAL REGIME. SIR SEE-
WOOSAGUR CITED THE CASE OF COMMUNIST CITIZENS WHO EVERYDAY
ASK FOR POLITICAL ASYLUM ABROAD. THE COMMUNIST REGIME IS SO
SEVERE THAT THE RECIPIENTS OF NOBEL PRIZES HAVE NOT OBTAINED
AUTHORIZATION TO GO TO SWEDEN TO RECEIVE THEIR AWARDS. AS
FOR RELIGION, HE CITED A REUTERS DISPATCH FROM POLAND SAYING
THAT ONLY THOSE WHO DENY THEIR BELIEF IN GOD FIND WORK.
SIR SEEWOSAGUR SAID IN MAURITIUS WE HAVE AN INCREDIBLE NUMBER
OF PARTIES, ALL CREATED IN A FEW WEEKS. THEY ARE, FOR THE
MOST PART, CONTROLLED BY THE CIA, SOUTH AFRICA, COMMUNIST
COUNTRIES AND OTHER FOREIGN POWERS. YOU MUST BE DOUBLY
CAREFUL THAT THEY DO NOT TRANSFORM THIS COUNTRY
INTO A BRITISH GUYANA. HE DENOUNCED THE PARTIES WHICH
SPREAD MONEY IN ABUNDANCE AND WHICH HAVE RENTED DOZENS OF
CARS. I WONDER WHERE THEY GET SUCH AN AMOUNT OF MONEY? IN
THE INDEPENDENCE PARTY, OF WHICH I AM THE TREASURER FOR THE
ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN, I HAVE ENORMOUS DIFFICULTY TO GATHER
NECESSARY MONEY FOR OUR EXPENSES. MOREOVER, MOST OF OUR
CANDIDATES DON'T HAVE ANY MONEY. MANY OF THEM PROTESTED
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LOUDLY WHEN I ASKED THEM FOR A SUM OF RS. 5,000 FOR THE
ORGANIZATION OF THE CAMPAIGN. YOU MUST REFLECT ON THAT.
IF THE LEADERS OF THE OTHER PARTIES ARE COMMITTED TO OTHER
PEOPLE TO FINANCE THEIR CAMPAIGN, HOW ARE THEY GOING TO BE
ABLE TO SERVE YOU?"

9 THE PMSD HELD ITS SECOND NATIONAL MEETING IN PAMPLEMOUSSES
ON DECEMBER 5 TO "RALLY THE NORTH." THE CROWD WAS ESTIMATED
VARIOUSLY AT BETWEEN 5,000 AND 8,000. THE VERY HOT WEATHER
AND THE TRADITIONAL WEAKNESS OF THE PARTY IN RURAL AREAS
WERE GIVEN AS EXPLANATIONS FOR THE RELATIVELY POOR TURNOUT.
A LONG CORTEGE OF CARS, MOTORCYCLES, BUSES AND TRUCKS BROUGHT
PARTY LEADER DUVAL AND HIS SUPPORTERS TO THE RALLY. ONE OF
THE CARS WAS IDENTIFIED AS BELONGING TO THE FRENCH EMBASSY,
WITH CD MARKINGS, AND ITS OCCUPANTS WERE WAVING THE PARTY'S

BLUE FLAGS CARRYING ITS SLOGAN: "COCK POWER".

10. THE MMM'S LE MILITANT OF DECEMBER 2 PUBLISHED AN ANNOUNCEMENT BY RAM PYNDIAH THAT HIS INVITATION TO A PARTY FOR ALL MMM MEMBERS, THEIR FAMILIES AND MMM SYMPATHIZERS PLANNED FOR DECEMBER 24 TO CELEBRATE THE "VICTORY OF THE PEOPLE" HAS BEEN CANCELLED AND THE INVITATION WITHDRAWN. THE ANNOUNCEMENT SAID THAT THIS DECISION WAS TAKEN BECAUSE THE ORGANIZATION OF SUCH A CELEBRATION COULD BE MISINTERPRETED AND COULD LEAD TO "LEGAL COMPLICATIONS AFFECTING THE HOLDING OF THE ELECTIONS." AN ANTI-MMM NEWSPAPER HAD EARLIER ESTIMATED THAT 100,000 PEOPLE MIGHT HAVE ATTENDED PYNDIAH'S PARTY, WHICH WOULD HAVE COST HIM, AT RS. 10 A HEAD, A MILLION RUPEES EASILY. THE REASON FOR THE CANCELLATION WAS APPARENTLY LEGAL RATHER THAN FINANCIAL, HOWEVER. L'EXPRESS SAID THE PARTY WAS CALLED OFF BECAUSE THE INVITATION COULD BE CONSIDERED A CASE OF "TREATING" (VOTE BUYING) WHICH IF PROVED COULD ANNUL THE ELECTION OF ALL MMM CANDIDATES.

11. AT A PRESS CONFERENCE ON DECEMBER 3 THE LEADERSHIP OF THE MMM CLAIMED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN MANIPULATING THE POLICE AND THE TELEVISION AND RADIO AGAINST THEIR PARTY. THEY SAID THAT THE POLICE COMMISSIONER HAD ORIGINALLY AUTHORIZED A NATIONAL MMM RALLY FOR SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12 IN PORT LOUIS BUT HAD THEN WITHDRAWN PERMISSION " IN THE LIGHT OF PREVAILING DEVELOPMENTS". THESE "DEVELOPMENTS" TURNED OUT TO BE THAT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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THE INDEPENDENCE PARTY HAD SCHEDULED A MEETING FOR THE SAME DAY IN THE SAME CITY. THE MMM AT FIRST RESCHEDULED ITS NATIONAL MEETING FOR SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11, IN PORT LOUIS BUT THEN DECIDED TO MOVE IT TO ROSE HILL ON THE ORIGINAL SUNDAY DATE. (IT IS MUCH EASIER TO DRAW A LARGE CROWD ON SUNDAY.) THE MMM LEADERS ALSO STATED THAT THEY WERE NOT RECEIVING A FAIR ALLOCATION OF TIME ON GOVERNMENT-OWNED MEDIA.

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IO-13 /095 W

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12. AS ITS RALLIES THE MMM SPEAKERS CONTINUED TO CHARGE THAT THE INDEPENDENCE PARTY AND THE PMSD HAVE FORMED AN ELECTORAL ALLIANCE AGAINST THEM. LE MILITANT PUBLISHED A PICTURE OF DUVAL WITH HIS ARM AROUND RAMGOOLAM. COUNTERING THIS CHARGE, THE NATION (LABOR), CLAIMED THAT ONE WING OF THE MMM IS SEEKING AN ALLIANCE WITH THE PMSD TO PREVENT LABOR FROM WINNING ANY SEATS IN THE CITIES. THIS PAPER PUBLISHED A PICTURE OF DUVAL AND BERENGER, PROBABLY TAKEN WHEN THEY FORMED A TACTICAL ALLIANCE SOME MONTHS AGO TO TRY TO FORCE THE GOVERNMENT TO HOLD ELECTIONS.

14. THE MMM HAS BEGUN TO RESPOND TO THE "ANTI-COMMUNIST" CAMPAIGN OF ITS OPPONENTS. MMM SPEAKERS AT THE FIRST OPEN-AIR RALLY OF THE PARTY IN BEAU BASSIN, WHICH DRES A SMALLER CROWD THAN HAD THE PMSD EARLIER IN THE SAME TWON, ADDRESSED THEIR REMARKS TO THE MIDDLE CLASS, TELLING THEM THEY HAD NOTHING TO FEAR FROM THE MMM. THEY SAID THE PARTY WOULD NOT TAKE AWAY THEIR POSSESSIONS, NOR INTERFERE WITH THEIR RELIGIOUS PRACTICES. PARTY LEADER BERENGER TOLD THEM NOT TO SUCCUMB TO THE "ANTI-COMMUNIST HYSTERIA" OF THE OTHER PARTIES. HE SAID THEIR HOMES, CARS, AND SALARIES OF \$600-700 WOULD NOT BE AFFECTED BY A MMM VICTORY. BERENGER SAID THE PARTY'S TARGET IS CAPITALISM AND THE "FOURTEEN FAMILIES WHO CONTROL THE WHOLE COUNTRY." HE ALSO SAID RAMGOOLAM IS OLD AND SICK, AND WHEN HE GOES IT WILL BE A COALITION OF
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DUVALL AND BOOLELL THAT WILL ASSUME POWER, AND "WE KNOW WHAT THAT WILL MEAN."

14. THE SMALLER PARTIES ARE FIGHTING AN UPHILL BATTLE AND ARE HAVING DIFFICULTY DRAWING CROWDS OF ANY SIZE TO THEIR RALLIES. THE UDM ENJOYS SUPPORT FROM SOME OF THE INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPERS AND HAS AT LEAST SUCCEEDED IN GETTING ITS MESSAGE ACROSS TO THE ELECTORATE. PARTY LEADER OLLIVRY GAVE A PRESS CONFERENCE IN WHICH HE ARGUED THAT A COALITION GOVERNMENT OF SOME KINE WILL BE NECESSARY AFTER THE ELECTIONS. HE IMPLIED THAT THE UDM HOPED TO DO WELL ENOUGH TO PARTICIPATE

IN A COALITION. THE UDM HAS BEEN DIRECTING ITS CAMPAIGN PRIMARILY AGAINST THE PMSD AND AGAINST DUVAL PERSONALLY. ITS SPEAKERS RIDICULE THE IDEA THAT THE PMSD CAN BE THE MEANS TO "STOP THE COMMUNISTS". ONE UDM SPEAKER SAID THAT WOULD BE "LIKE DRINKING LYSOL TO CURE A STOMACHE ACHE". THE PMSD'S PAST RECORD OF RESORTING TO VIOLENCE AND RESTRICTING THE LIBERTIES OF MAURITIANS ARE REPEATEDLY DENOUNCED BY UDM SPEAKERS.

15. AT A PRESS CONFERENCE ON DECEMBER 3 HAWOLDAR, THE PSP LEASER, SAID THAT HIS PARTY WOULD NEGOTIATE WITH NO ONE PRIOR TO THE ELECTIONS. HE TALKED OF VARIOUS KINDS OF PRESSURE BEING EXERTED AGAINST HIS CANDIDATES TO GET THEM TO WITHDRAW. APPARENTLY THIS PRESSURE WAS SUCCESSFUL IN SOME CASES, FOR THE PARTY LOST SIX OF ITS CANDIDATES WHO WITHDREW PRIOR TO THE DEADLINE. THE PSP HELD ITS FIRST MAJOR RALLY IN TRIOLET, THE PRIME MINISTER'S HOME DISTRICT. ABOUT 400 PEOPLE ATTENDED. HAWOLDAR PRAISED RAMGOOLAM BUT SAID THAT THE LABOR PARTY NEEDS TO BE PURGED.

16. THE INDEPENDENT PAPER WEEK-END ON DECEMBER 5 HAD THE SECOND OF ITS WEEKLY ANALYSES OF THE CAMPAIGN. THE SECOND ARTICLE CONSISTED MOSTLY OF FAIRLY OBVIOUS OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE PROBABLE BEHAVIOR OF THE MAURITIAN ELECTORATE AND STUDIOUSLY AVOIDED MAKING PREDICTIONS OF THE OUTCOME. (WEEK-END, WHICH TAKES AN ANTI-GOVERNMENT AND ANTI-PMSD EDITORIAL POSITION, WAS APPARENTLY EMBARRASSED BY ITS FIRST ARTICLE WHICH, AS REPORTED REFTEL, SAID THE PMSD HAD MADE A COMEBACK AND THE IP WAS DOING VERY WELL.) THE PAPER SAID THAT THE ELECTORATE CAN BE DIVIDED INTO THREE MAJOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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GROUPS: (A) THOSE WHOSE ECONOMIC SITUATION HAS BECOME BETTER SINCE THE LAST ELECTIONS; (B) THOSE WHOSE ECONOMIC SITUATION HAS REMAINED THE SAME; AND (C) THOSE WHOSE ECONOMIC SITUATION HAS GROWN WORSE. GROUP (A) WILL VOTE FOR THE IP OR THE PMSD, ACCORDING TO THE PAPER, BECAUSE THEY ARE AFRAID OF CHANGE, AS REPRESENTED BY THE MMM. THESE VOTERS WILL CHOOSE BETWEEN THE IP AND THE PMSD ACCORDING TO GEOGRAPHICAL AND COMMUNAL FACTORS RATHER THAN IDEOLOGY, WITH THE IP BEING STRONGER IN THE COUNTRYSIDE AND THE PMSD STRONGER IN THE TOWNS. GROUP (B), ACCORDING TO WEEK-END, IS LIKELY TO VOTE FOR THE PMSD BECAUSE THESE PEOPLE ARE AFRAID OF TAKING RISKS AND THUS ARE OPPOSED TO THE MMM, YET THEY ARE AT THE SAME TIME FRUSTRATED AND HOLD THE INDEPENDENCE PARTY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ECONOMIC STAGNATION OF THE COUNTRY. GROUP (C), SAYS THE NEWSPAPER, WILL PROVIDE THE BASIS FOR MMM STRENGTH ALTHOUGH SOME OF THIS GROUP WHO FEAR THE "COMMUNISM" OF THE MMM WILL OPT FOR THE PMSD. THE READER WOULD CONCLUDE FROM THE ABOVE ANALYSIS THAT THE PMSD ENJOYS SUPPORT IN ALL THREE GROUPS. HOWEVER, WEEK-END PROCEEDS TO A GEOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS LEADING

TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THE IP WILL DO BEST BY MAKING A STRONG
SHOWING IN THE RURAL AREAS AS WELL AS WINNING A FEW URBAN
SEATS. THE MMM WILL DO WELL IN THE CITIES AND WILL WIN A FEW
RURAL SEATS, WHILE THE PMSD WILL TRAIL WITH ITS CANDIDATES
WINNING PERHAPS ONLY HALF THE URBAN CONSTITUENCIES.
WEEK-END PROMISES TO MAKE A PREDICTION OF THE ELECTORAL
OUTCOME IN ITS NEXT WEEKLY ARTICLE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: COMMUNISM, ELECTIONS, ELECTION CANDIDATES, POLITICAL PARTIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976PORTL01072
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760451-1172
From: PORT LOUIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761266/aaaacewg.tel
Line Count: 447
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 9
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 PORT LOUIS 1061
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 MAR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09 MAR 2004 by GarlanWA>; APPROVED <06 APR 2004 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRE-ELECTION ROUND-UP: DECEMBER 6
TAGS: PINT, MP
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006